

From: [morgan c levy](#)
To: [Coolidge, Keith@DeltaCouncil](#)
Cc: [Workgroup Comments@DeltaCouncil](#); [Macaulay, Terry@DeltaCouncil](#); [Rogers, Pat@DeltaCouncil](#)
Subject: DSC Workgroup 8.13.2010 Mtg: UC Berkeley grad student input/response
Date: Friday, August 13, 2010 10:26:21 AM

Hello,

I participated in the workshop from the phone yesterday.

I am a grad student at UC Berkeley's Energy and Resources Group (ERG). I just returned from a water management Fulbright fellowship in The Netherlands where I was working on a project comparing agricultural water management policy and practices in our Bay Delta with those of the Dutch Delta through interviews with delta farmers (and ultimately nonprofit and gov agency folks as well). Prior to that, I worked in the NRDC's Water Program here in the Bay Area.

I was interested in the meeting because discussion of delta stakeholder communications ended up being a large part of my research – asking farmers, NGO and gov employees in both places how they communicated with one another and circulated info on delta issues. With farmers and residents, this happens largely offline (even in Holland), even though many official conversations have moved online for the government, third-party organizations, and the general public.

I and another participant mentioned on the phone that we receive the most current information about delta (and larger CA water) issues via rss feed/readers that aggregate blogs or websites. This is clearly not the way many in the delta community are getting or sharing their own information – even though having a news stream is often the most comprehensive way to receive up-to-date info on myriad delta discussions and forums.

There's a lot of nice and accessible information technologies out there at this point that could easily address some of the concerns and needs brought up in the meeting - and that can be adapted to the needs of delta's particular constituencies. The new council's website (and broad interest in what the council will be offering) seems like an exciting point to potentially re-invigorate ongoing discussions through the launch of innovative yet accessible digital communications.

During my research, I had begun to think about developing an online forum for discussion of delta issues across the two deltas, but I think the need for simple online interactive information and forums applies to the bay delta here alone. Delta farmers, fishermen, and residents, particularly, have their own informal and predominantly offline networks. It's a shame not only for farmers, but also for the rest (academics, nonprofits, business, gov employees) that the ag community and other locals aren't necessarily plugged into the same information grid. I've seen it be a large point of contention on ALL sides.

It sounds like you guys are really making an effort to work on "co-equal goals" between in-person and electronic communications (as Keith mentioned), and that's great!

If you have interest in an academic collaboration on communications, I

would be happy to chat with your team and share ideas or potential online/digital communications projects focused on delta issues.

Best,
Morgan

--

Morgan C. Levy
Energy and Resources Group
University of California, Berkeley
mclevy@berkeley.edu